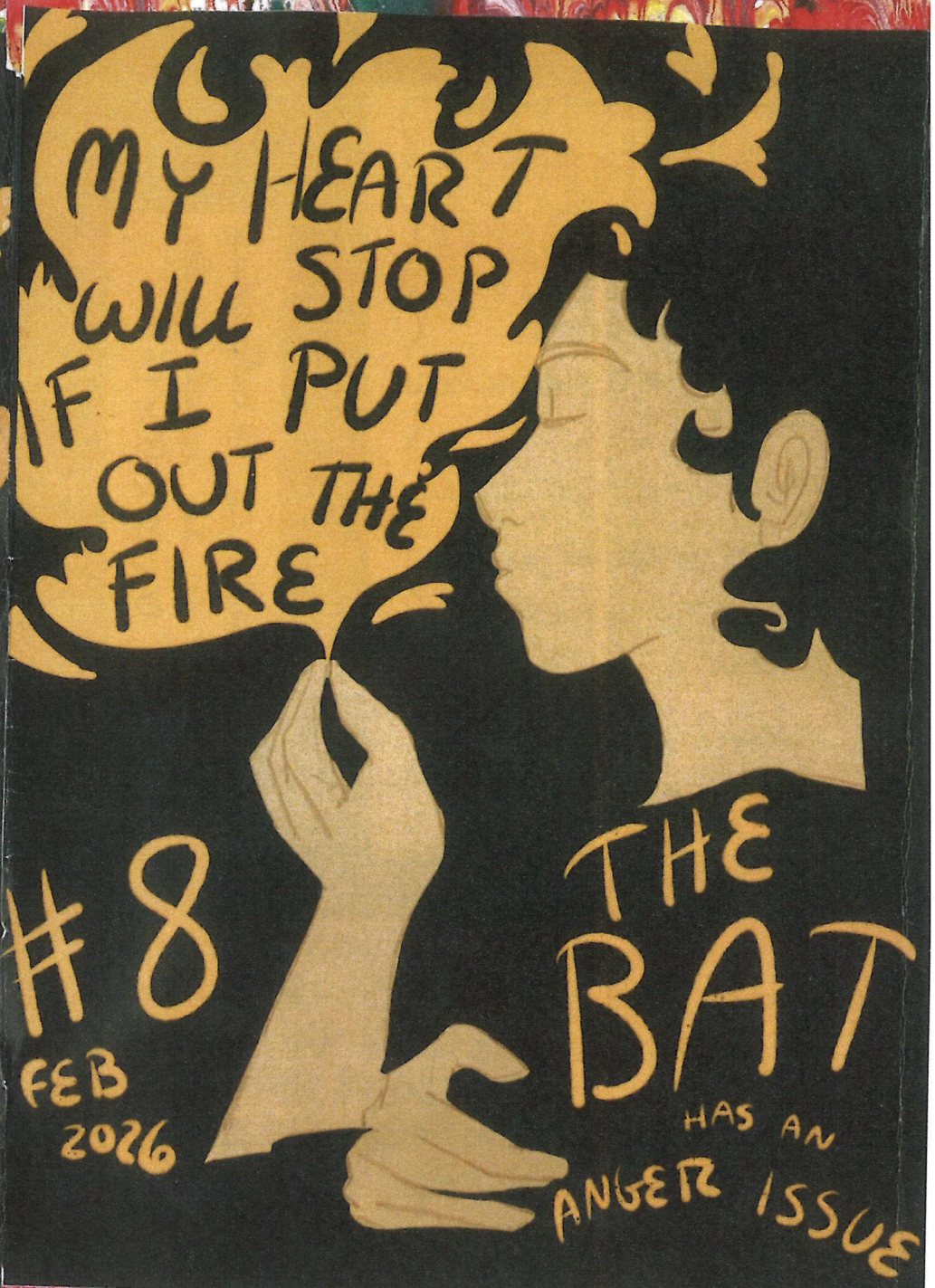
THE ANGER I HOLD LIKE A CAGED ANIMAL IN MY CHEST DOES NOT MAKE THE UNJUST JUST. IT DOES NOT UNDO MY HURT, DOES NOT MAKE MY PEERS MOVE. THE CAGED ANIMAL JUST GETS WEARY + BEATEN. HIS SILENCE IS MY SILENCE, HIS WOUNDS MY WOUNDS. AND IT WAS ALL MY FAULT FOR TELLING HIM HIS BARK MUST ALWAYS BE A HOSTILE + UNARTICULATED THING. THAT HIS ANGER CREATES ENEMIES + NOT FRIENDS, AND IT WASN'T TRUE. MY ANGER HAS MADE ITS WAY INTO MY HANDS & THOSE HANDS HAVE COOKED DINNER. THE RABID DOG OF MY ANGER HAS TRAVERSED THE WINTERLAND OF MY LONG-HELD SILENCE TO SPEAK + TO RESOLVE. THE ANIMAL OF MY ANGER HAS WEPT, BEEN HELD, HAS WALKED MILES, OPENED A BOOK, BEGUN A NEW PAGE. I LEARN TO MOLD MY WORDS TO ITS WILL, TO WALK WITH IT AS IT BARKS. =

MY HEART WILL STOP IF I PUT OUT THE FIRE

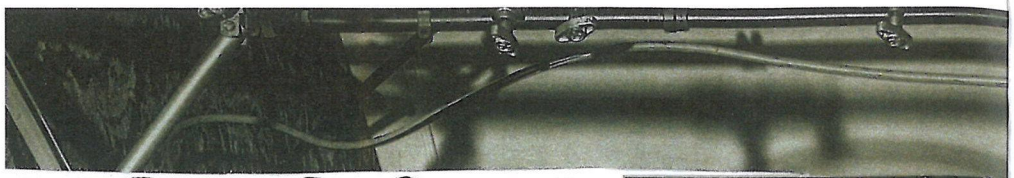


#8

FEB 2026

THE BAT

HAS AN ANGER ISSUE



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IT BARKS =^

Find us @battenhaus on IG, see what we do

this zine was made with love (and maybe a little anger...) by the members of Batten Haus. we hope these pages inspire you to think deeply about anger; your anger, collective anger, the power and potential of rage, the grief and sadness of anger, but also its transformative power. Batten Love ♡

SOMETIMES I HAVE TROUBLE RECOGNIZING MY OWN ANGER.

I DON'T LIKE TO BE ANGRY

BECAUSE USUALLY ANGER IS MISGUIDED INSECURITY

I READ AUDRE LORDE'S *THE USES OF ANGER* FOR THE FIRST TIME AND SAW ANGER DIFFERENTLY

ANGER AS RESPONSIBILITY,

ANGER AS CARING.

ANGER AS PROTECTION OF OTHERS,

ANGER AS COMMUNITY,

ANGER AS A TOOL IN REFLEX TO BIGOTRY AND VIOLENCE

I AM PROUD OF MY ABILITY TO DISSECT MY ANGER BEFORE IT SURFACES

BUT I ALSO KNOW I AM EXCHANGING ACTION FOR PATIENCE

I DO NOT WANT TO STIFLE THIS ANGER ANYMORE

On Anger & (In)Action

page by Charlee Thacker

Anger is an emotion I admittedly find myself out of touch with. My response to my own anger is an attempt to "unfeel" the presence of it—"avoid it, deflect it, or flee from it," as Audre Lorde would articulate the feeling of hiding from anger (283). It is much easier for me to feel anger as an extension on the behalf of others or in response to the wider traumas of the world, but that anger is still held at somewhat of a distance from the subject that is *my own*, which is something I want to repair. Essentially, I want to cup anger within my own hands again. I want to allow myself to feel it run deeper.

Like many, I was socialized to be ashamed of my anger. I would much rather let my own anger suffocate me from the inside than externally express it for use out of my fear of discomforting those who bear witness to my anger or those who I should direct my anger towards. I want to improve myself by no longer fearing what my anger has the potential to do, the potential to change. That is why I move to reflect on Audre Lorde's essay about *Uses of Anger*. In my page, I pull passages from her essay to more deeply explore my relationship to anger, especially as a potential political tool, and I encourage everyone reading this page to go read Lorde's essay in full as well.

Audre Lorde, the self-proclaimed black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet, writes of anger through her experience as a woman of color. In the opening page, she frames: "my response to racism is anger. I have lived with that anger, on that anger, beneath that anger, on top of that anger, ignoring that anger, feeding upon that anger, learning to use that anger before it laid my visions to waste, for most of my life. Once I did it in silence, afraid of the weight of that anger. My fear of that anger taught me nothing. Your fear of that anger will teach you nothing" (278). This is the most critical of messages that comes at the opening of the essay: fearing anger produces nothing.

I relate to being afraid of the weight of my anger, which is why I seek to actively challenge that fear. Lorde is correct that the fear of anger, not anger, is what will teach you nothing. As someone who has largely been pushed into navigating PWI spaces for education, I was socialized to fear my anger, which has resulted in the wasting away of my own personal energies. I was taught to supress my emotions—too bratty, sassy, loud, irritable, *angry*—in service of pleasing those around me, and over time, I lost what it meant for me to externally experience these emotions and release them.

Anger typically arises with secondary emotions, like shame and guilt. I reach to Lorde again: "My anger and your attendant fears, perhaps, are spotlights that can be used for your growth in the same way I have had to use learning to express anger for my growth. But for corrective surgery, not guilt. Guilt and defensiveness are bricks in a wall against which we will all perish, for they serve none of our futures" (278). I recognize now more than ever that hiding from anger, in actuality, is the cause of the paralysis many feel when it comes to being hopelessly or helplessly angry with no ability to channel or direct said anger.

When I feel angry about everything that is happening—in Palestine, in Sudan, in Congo, during ICE raids, to the rise of every day racist, colonial practices of violence—I sometimes freeze in my own anger because it feels as though we, *we collectively*, are not publicly angry enough. Embarrassingly, I freeze in my own anger because I have been taught not to channel anger as a positive, constructive emotion, but rather, I have been taught to fear my own potential of changing the world through my anger.

I don't want to stew in my anger and watch it morph into guilt at the end of the day alone, I want to collectively use our anger to grow change together. After all, "anger expressed and translated into action in the service of our vision and our future is a liberating and strengthening act of clarification, for it is in the painful process of this translation that we identify who are our allies with whom we have grave differences, and who are our genuine enemies. Anger is loaded with information" (Lorde, 280). We need to use our anger in more informed ways, and with each other, in order to liberate ourselves. What can anger teach me, teach you, teach us?

A Note on Guilt's Ability to Abolish Anger

"It is not the anger of [others] that will destroy us, but our refusals to stand still, to listen to its rhythms, to learn within it, to move beyond the manner of presentation to the substance, to tap that anger as an important source of empowerment.

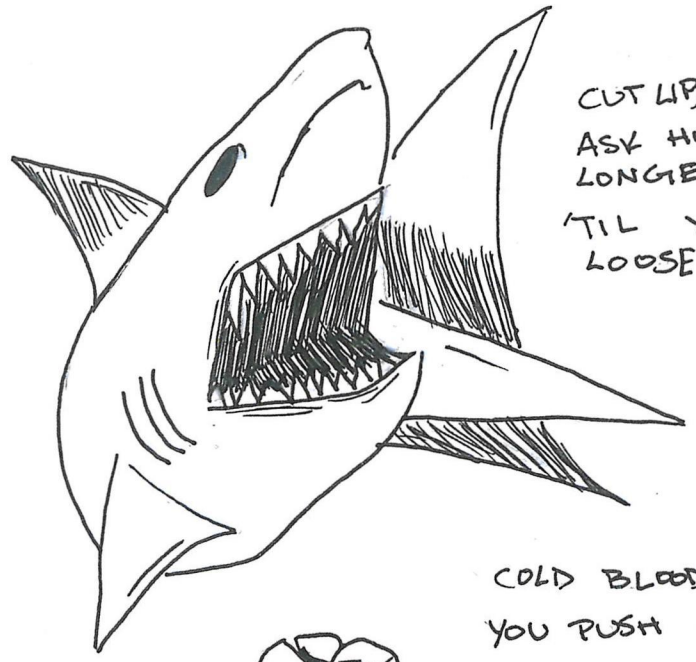
I cannot hide my anger to spare you guilt, nor hurt feelings, nor answering anger; for to do so insults and trivializes all our efforts. Guilt is not a response to anger; it is a response to one's own actions or lack of action. If it leads to change then it can be useful, since it becomes no longer guilt but the beginning of knowledge. Yet all too often, guilt is just another name for impotence, for defensiveness destructive of

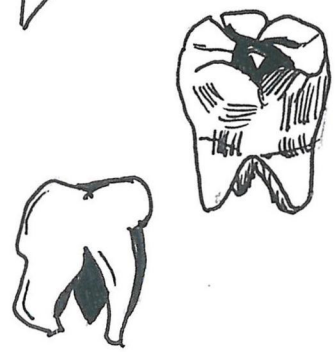
communication; it becomes a device to protect ignorance and the continuation of things the way they are, the ultimate protection for changelessness [...]

I have no creative use for guilt, yours or my own. Guilt is only another way of avoiding informed action, of buying time out of the pressing need to make clear choices, out of the approaching storm that can feed the earth as well as bend the trees. If I speak to you in anger, at least I have spoken to you" (Lorde, 282-283).

I cite this longer portion of the essay because this is where my mediation on anger as action began. Guilt is a much easier emotion for me to feel—I am attuned, perhaps at times to attuned, to my feelings of guilt. I needed to remind myself that guilt is *not, is never*, a creative emotion like Lorde tells us here. I think we, in a broader cultural sense, have become to attuned to our feelings of helplessness and guilt. "What can I do? How do I get involved? I can't do anything. It feels pointless. Nothing will change." That is why things continue to go as they are. I think it's important to voice our fears and guilt to each other in order to release them, but then they *have* to be gone.

They, the powers that be, don't want us to be angry because we're harder to subdue that way. Again, to reflect on Lorde, we need to listen to the rhythms of our anger and learn from it—the emotion loaded with information. So if you, like me, still struggle to tap into anger at its fullest potential, if you, like me, can let it fizzle too quick out of fear, then we need to work on a new rhythm together. We no longer have time to spare on concealing anger.





STANDING AND NOT SITTING

CLARA FEE

ONE

I am at my worst when I am thinking
of myself as an angry person,
when I am doing anger.

TWO

I feel most angry, most potently,
when I am confronted with incompetence,
empty authority, helplessness, unfairness and
(most deeply and most potently of all) injustice;
I feel it physically and quickly,
down the body,
together with a shock behind the eyelids
and a burning through the esophogus.

THREE

There was a line in a poem I wrote a long
time ago: "For me, it is hard to sympathize
with inability." I struggle with anger because
the thing towards which I am angry, mostly—
—by simple majority— is myself—
—my orientation is selfwards, too often.
So much— most?— of my external anger
is externalized anger, and I often regret
its expression.

FOUR

Not always, though.

FIVE

I am not at my worst, but perhaps not at my best
either, when I accept and allow the anger.
Just like they teach you to do with all the thoughts
when you meditate— observe the thought,
observe how the observation changes its shape,
and allow its passage through.
Just like I have never been able to do with
any, or most, of the thoughts.

SIX

I am getting a little bit angry writing this.

SEVEN

Lucky number seven. So where is all my anger?
There seems to be plenty of outlets for it now.
More than there ever have been, if some
are to be believed.
At best, it's low simmering and calm; at best,
it's standing and not sitting.
At best it's quieting the fear to stone.
I think deeply about things; most things, even,
though I can't claim they are the right ones.
I try to remain a serious person. I try not
to let the foot-stomping bitter-teared
older sister, childish in her cry, who demands
uncritical fairness towards especially her, pull too
much weight. I try instead to lay myself,
ten toes down, heavy and grateful.

A handful of words On Anger

The expression of rage is most often dismissed as useless or disruptive. Anger is accused of being a reckless emotion „ a troubling one to "our community." let's be clear that apathy and fear never got us anywhere. my fear of anger has taught me nothing and neither will yours. for anger between peers births change, not destruction —and *the discomfort and sense of loss it often causes is not fatal, but a sign of growth.*

This is Audre Lorde in 1981. For this page of the bat I've borrowed her words from a keynote presentation at the National Women's Studies Association Conference, in Storrs, Connecticut, titled "The Uses of Anger: Women Responding to Racism."

She names several angers:

Anger of exclusion

of *unquestioned* privilege

of racial distortions

(defensiveness,

of *silence*, ill-use, stereotyping, misnaming, *betrayal*, and *co-optation*.

What is important here is that Lorde insists that our arsenal of anger is motivating, momentum-creating „ & useful against "those oppressions, personal and institutional, which brought that anger into being." focused with precision, anger can be fuel.

"Anger expressed and translated into action in the service of our vision and our future is a liberating and strengthening act of clarification, *for it is in the painful process of this translation that we identify who are our allies with whom we have grave differences, and who are our genuine enemies.*"

"[Their] hatred and our anger are very different. Hatred is the fury of those who do not share our goals, and its object is death and destruction. Anger is a grief of distortions between peers, and its object is change."

I am familiar with the accusation that our anger is aimless „ or if aimed, then the accusation that it is aimed at the wrong targets. fifty years ago, Lorde was told by white women at the conference and by black men in the movement that her rage was naive and misdirected. she offers in response words on anger's many uses and its usefulness... she clarifies her rage and in the process, asks us to clarify our own.

I believe it is our moral imperative to recognize our position as students at an institution that depends on an industry of dehumanization. by that i mean an institution with a racist history that it has only begun to confront . by that i mean an institution that actively refuses to divest from zionist technology complicit in a genocide. to borrow from Hanif Abdurraqib, "there is no sanitizing this place and there is no sanitizing yourself through appealing to a heart that does not function." don't forget we are students at an institution that ignores student demands when convenient, that tries to trick us into mistaking administrative-approved remembrance for respect.

our principled resistance is reliant on our own power → which is fueled by our own anger → anger that is loaded with information and energy. as we navigate emergent issues, collective anger is the ultimate defense against changelessness and our North Star.

DIG. DIG.
DIG. DIG.
WHEN DID I FIND THE TIME TO BURY ALL THIS?
AND WHO'D I BURY THIS 4?
I GUESS, IT MADE SENSE FOR ME TO DIG ALL THOSE HOLES BACK THEN, BUT...
WHO IS IT SERVING NOW?
HEY BUD! WHATCHA DOIN?
!NO MORE HOLES!
NO MORE HOLES!
BY MAYA

with love

A flawed premise to treat anger as wholly destructive, circumscribed as negative. This does not allow for the depth of emotion as experienced outside the binary of "productive" or "unproductive." I have been angry for much of my life, and often to the detriment of myself and my relationships. I pushed through crowds in my high school hallways with my elbows out, warped my frustrations into a general anti-social resentment, projected myself out into the world and hated what reflected back. Something grown out of now.

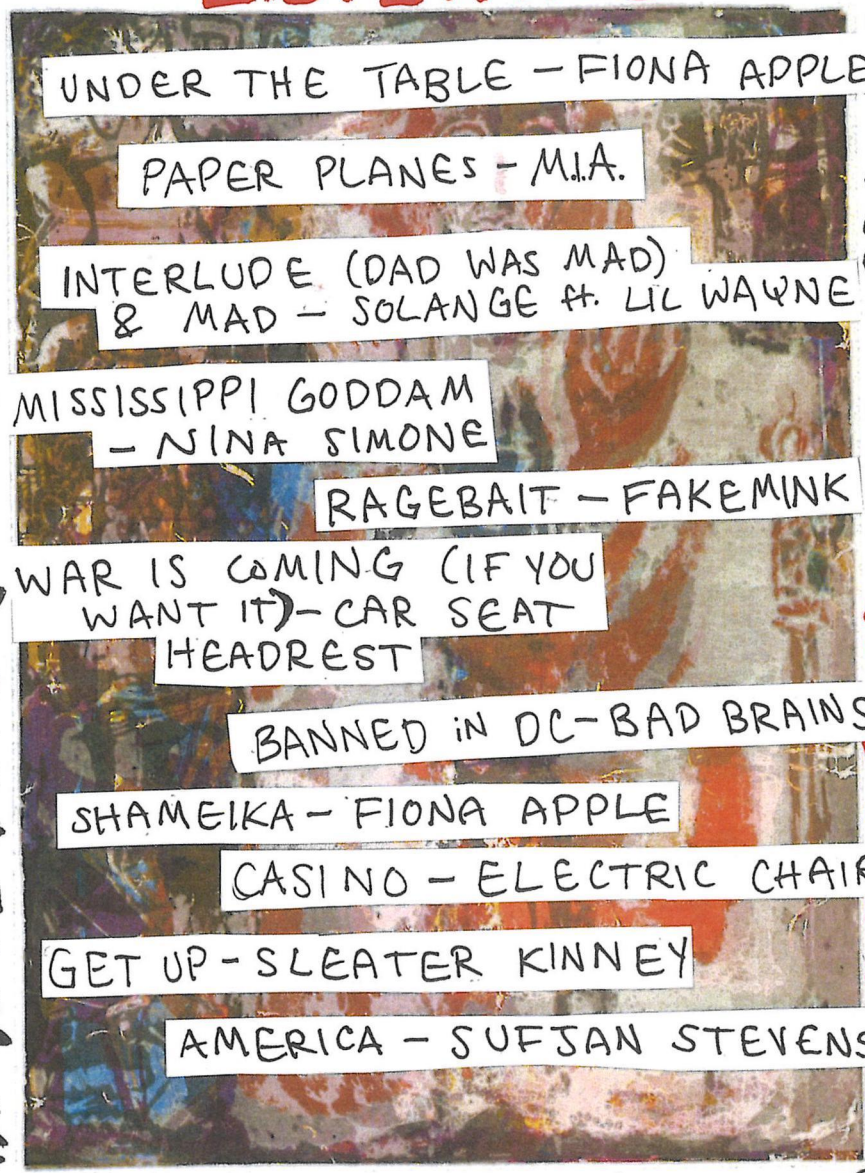
High school counselor tells me, "you can't control the things that make you mad, you can only control how you react to them." I will push back and say, I do not accept a stagnant world, and beautiful things come about when people stay angry. Truth there, nonetheless. Anger is a powerful signifier, but weakly centered without a catalyst. My anger in the hallways was loose, my anger at this country is steady and deliberate.

I would implore you, friend, feel angry and feel it deeply, churn your stomach and ripple your spine. I have been talking to people in my life, friends/peers/family members, who are maybe only now facing their anger on a daily basis, no longer quite so defensible to shut off and ignore.

And see, you have always had concern, one-off exposures to wrongness will trigger the inner humanitarian to say "that was wrong, poor thing, this should not happen again." How to build that emotion into something more critical, enduring, world-building? Chain those one-offs together, you reveal the story of our nation, the global super-destroyer.

Can your anger come from a place of love, deep love, one which asks you to reject all systems of power that privilege some (maybe you) at the expense of others? I would say, I love these crowds, I love these people that I share a world with. And better worlds are possible, have always been possible, and I am so fucking angry! at the forces which conspire to keep them from becoming.

SUGGESTED LISTENING



UNDER THE TABLE - FIONA APPLE

PAPER PLANES - M.I.A.

INTERLUDE (DAD WAS MAD) & MAD - SOLANGE ft. LIL WAYNE

MISSISSIPPI GODDAM - NINA SIMONE

RAGEBAIT - FAKEMINK

WAR IS COMING (IF YOU WANT IT) - CAR SEAT HEADREST

BANNED IN DC - BAD BRAINS

SHAMEIKA - FIONA APPLE

CASINO - ELECTRIC CHAIR

GET UP - SLEATER KINNEY

AMERICA - SUFJAN STEVENS

a playlist to accompany this zine <3

♥ Clio